METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR CONNECTING
PRIVATELY ADDRESSED NETWORKS

5   ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Methods and apparatuses for connecting via a public network at least two privately addressed networks sharing a reserved address space are disclosed herein. One aspect provides a method comprising the steps of

10 automatically assigning respective unique addresses from said reserved address space to each of at least two privately addressed networks and automatically routing communications between the at least two privately addressed networks dependent on the unique addresses via a virtual network link. The method may comprise the further step of automatically creating the virtual network link

15 between the at least two privately addressed networks. The unique addresses may be automatically assigned and the communications may be automatically routed without any human intervention, and no network address translation may be required at the gateways of the privately addressed networks. The virtual network link may comprise a tunnel through the Internet and the unique

20 addresses may comprise unique Internet Protocol (IP) subnet prefixes assigned to each of the at least two privately addressed networks.